

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:  
APPROPRIATIONS

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HOMELAND SECURITY  
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

February 20, 2015

Chairman Orrin Hatch  
Committee on Finance  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Ron Wyden  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Finance  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Hatch and Ranking Member Wyden:

I write to you today about the Finance Committee's ongoing work crafting legislation on Trade Promotion Authority (TPA). This legislation will direct the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) in its current negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Transatlantic Treaty and Investment Partnership (TTIP). As such, I am writing to request that TPA legislation direct the USTR to reject any efforts that would restrict the ability of U.S. producers of cheese, meat, and alcohol to use generic names as they have for generations.

I am aware of attempts by our trading partners to use free trade agreements to impose barriers to U.S. exports under the guise of protection for 'geographical indications,' (GIs) in their agreements with other countries. For example, cheese producers in the Wisconsin have already lost export opportunities in Canada due to restrictions on the use of "feta" in the recently concluded trade agreement between Canada and the European Union (EU). And meat producers have lost export opportunities in Central America over the use of "bologna" due to the EU trade agreements requiring that all bologna sold in the region must come from Italy.

In Wisconsin, businesses—many small, medium, or family owned—could have their livelihoods destroyed by unfair and unreasonable attempts to use GIs as a barrier to trade and competition. The regions claiming the GI could seize the market share American producers have worked hard to build over generations. These restrictions will limit competition, increase prices, and give consumers fewer choices of products they have grown accustomed to.

I am concerned that these restrictions would particularly impact smaller and artisan producers of meat products like bratwurst, wiener schnitzel and black forest ham; cheese products like asiago, gruyere, and mozzarella; and alcohol products like 'Bavarian Black' and 'Oktoberfest' style beers. That is why last year I wrote three letters to the USTR urging the office to reject any EU attempts to limit common food names for cheese, meat, and beer.

I appreciate the Finance Committee's previous attention to the misuse of GIs by our trading partners and its inclusion of clear language in last Congress' TPA legislation, S.1900, to oppose these restrictions. As you draft a new version of this bill, I ask that you again include strong and

clear language instructing USTR negotiators to oppose any attempts to limit the ability of U.S. cheese, meat, and alcohol producers to use common food names.

Sincerely,



Senator Tammy Baldwin